



National Institute of Justice

Julie E. Samuels, Acting Director

October 2000

School Safety Research and Evaluation

APPLICATION DEADLINE:

December 15, 2000

**U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs**
810 Seventh Street N.W.
Washington, DC 20531

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For grant and funding information, contact:
Department of Justice Response Center
800-421-6770

Office of Justice Programs
World Wide Web Site:
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov>

National Institute of Justice
World Wide Web Site:
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij>

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PLEASE NOTE! CHANGES IN THE APPLICATION PROCESS

- Privacy Certificate—requirements have been revised
- Protection of Human Subjects—**new form** (310) required
- National Environmental Policy Act—there is a compliance advisory
- Items 10 (Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number) and 12 (Geographic Areas Affected by Project—**new form**) of the SF 424 (Application for Federal Assistance)—there are now full instructions for completing these items.

For complete information about these changes, consult the *Guidelines for Submitting Proposals for National Institute of Justice-Sponsored Research*

I. Introduction

The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) serves as the independent research and development arm of the Department of Justice. Since 1995, NIJ, in partnership with the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS), has instituted a broad research and evaluation agenda focused on transformations taking place in policing.

NIJ has awarded research grants as a part of this partnership through financial support under the authority of the Public Safety Partnership and Community Policing Act (Title I) of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 (the Crime Act) [see 42 U. S. C. X 3796dd-4, 3793 (c) (11) (B)]. These awards total over \$47 million for research and evaluation efforts regarding the implementation, consequences, and implications of community oriented and problem-solving policing.

Complete lists of the studies funded in previous years are available from the U. S. Department of Justice Response Center at (800)-421-6770, at (202) 307-1480 and by FAX at (202) 616-9294.

The National Institute of Justice is continuing this collaboration with the COPS office with this request for applications on research and evaluation of the role of law enforcement in school safety and security, and school-based prevention and intervention.

NIJ is streamlining its process to accommodate the volume of proposals anticipated under this and other Crime Act solicitations. Researchers can help in a significant way by sending NIJ a nonbinding letter of intent by **November 12, 2000**. The Institute will use these letters to forecast the numbers of peer panels it needs and to identify conflicts of interest among potential reviewers. There are two ways to send these letters. You can reach NIJ by Internet by sending e-mail to tellnij@ncjrs.org and identifying the solicitation and section(s) you expect to apply for. You can write a letter with the same information to **School Safety Research and Evaluation**, 810 Seventh Street N.W., Washington, DC 20531.

II. Background

According to a joint report by the U.S. Departments of Education and Justice (1998)¹, the vast majority of America's schools are safe places. Yet, reports of recent high profile shootings create the impression that violence is prevalent in our schools, instilling fear in the minds of parents, students and teachers. Schools that have serious crime and violence problems are perceived as having compromised the learning environment and endangered students and educators. Therefore, even a few incidents of sensational violence in schools are unacceptable as they have the potential to negatively impact the learning atmosphere in all schools. This issue will remain urgent for some time and requires comprehensive research and evaluation in

¹ "1999 Annual Report on School Safety" U.S. Departments of Education and Justice.

S o l i c i t a t i o n

order to help promote optimal security and a sense of security in schools.

Law enforcement often plays a central role in school safety and security, and school-based prevention and intervention. There is general agreement that all stakeholders including school leadership, teachers, staff, parents, students, law enforcement, community leaders, representatives of local government, and others have a critical role in creating and maintaining safe schools. What is less clear is the optimal role of law enforcement in collaborating with schools and communities to ensure a safe school environment.

In fulfillment of their roles in this endeavor, the U.S. Departments of Education, Justice, and Health and Human Services convened a strategic planning meeting of experts on school safety in April 1999. This meeting resulted in suggestions for research in many areas, with the aim of developing multi-disciplinary responses to problems of crime and violence in schools and communities. The discussions at the meeting focused broadly on:

- School crime - incidence and prevalence.
- Risk and protective factors for school violence.
- School-based prevention and intervention.
- School, community and family partnerships for safety.
- Law enforcement in schools.

Each of the above areas raised issues for research and evaluation. Participants particularly noted the lack of research and evaluation on the role of law enforcement in schools.

This solicitation partially addresses this gap and is a companion to an earlier solicitation issued by NIJ in cooperation with the COPS Office. The earlier solicitation called for an assessment of the role of school resource officers in creating safe schools, and was awarded in early 2000. An abstract of the successful proposal for this assessment is available to applicants seeking support through this solicitation. See the **“Applying”** section below for information about how to obtain this abstract.

The current solicitation is a broad, second step in the NIJ/COPS collaboration to help develop safer schools. It is anticipated that one or more proposals will be funded for a total of up to \$1,000,000 awarded for a

period of up to two years. Applicants should take special care that their application for funds under this solicitation does **not** duplicate efforts underway in the “National Assessment of School Resource Officer Programs.”

III. Purpose

Research supported by this solicitation is intended to address issues related to the role of law enforcement in school safety, including but not restricted to:

- Planning for school safety.
- Law enforcement organization, management, and strategy development and implementation for school safety.
- Law enforcement’s impact on ‘normal’ school processes.
- The effect of law enforcement’s school safety efforts on the community surrounding the school, after school programs, public fear, students’ fear, etc.

For the purposes of this solicitation, law enforcement is defined as sworn and/or non-sworn law enforcement officers employed by municipal law enforcement agencies, school districts or other organizations. Private security guards, volunteers and others are also included in this definition.

IV. Areas of Research

NIJ seeks proposals in three broad areas. Applicants are encouraged to concentrate their efforts in one or more of the following sections. Not all the research supported by this solicitation need be national in scope. But all supported research must have national implications - for example, case studies in a single site that have implications for national policy and potential for multiple jurisdiction adaptation. Research proposed for single sites must therefore be conceptually justified as having this potential.

Section One

In this section, NIJ is interested in research studies that focus on how, when, and by whom planning decisions for safe schools are made and implemented to reduce crime, rule violations and fear, in and around schools. Critical variables in the planning process are the role(s) of school administration, the

S o l i c i t a t i o n

mayor and/or council, community organizations, parents, students and other stakeholders in deciding when and how to involve law enforcement in school safety efforts. The goal of this research is to build knowledge about the optimal role for law enforcement in schools in a democratic society.

Suggested research questions may include:

- What is the impetus for involving what type of law enforcement in a school safety strategy?
- What type of law enforcement is involved in the planning process?
- How is law enforcement integrated into the overall strategy for school safety and the school community?
- How are programs/strategies evaluated by the community, school officials and law enforcement?

Section Two

Little systematic research has been conducted on organizational and management issues regarding the use and role of law enforcement in schools. This section of the solicitation calls for research on these issues and evaluations of organizational and management processes and strategies used by law enforcement agencies to promote safe schools.

Suggested research questions may include:

- How does law enforcement make decisions as to what strategy(s) to implement in a school or schools? Who is involved in these decisions?
- How are community policing philosophy, tactics and processes tailored to the school environment?
- How are decisions made about how to deploy officers/security personnel, managed by both the school administration and/or local police, in the schools?
- How is officer performance monitored and evaluated?
- How are strategy outcomes tracked and evaluated?
- What are the impacts of specific law enforcement school safety strategies?

Section Three

Law enforcement involvement in schools and communities to promote school safety has evolved and grown over the last 50 years in the United States.

Questions remain about when and how to involve law enforcement in schools to create a safe environment while maintaining the schools' creative learning environment.

Suggested research questions for this section may include:

- How do members of school communities - including administrators, teachers, students, parents and other local community members - react to law enforcement activities in schools?
- What are the relationships among law enforcement personnel in schools and parents, students, teachers, administrators, community leaders, and local police officers?
- How do law enforcement activities in the schools impact the safety planning and problem solving activities of schools?

Detailed comparisons of levels of violence and rule breaking in and around schools before and after involvement of law enforcement in the school setting may be needed in research supported by this solicitation. Appropriate statistical and spatial analyses that may identify hot spots in and around schools and possibly reveal patterns of violence across schools are encouraged. Information regarding perceptions of safety are also encouraged. These comparisons may highlight trends in types of violations which move communities to action, describe specific areas of success, and areas which need improvement, as well as assess issues of offense displacement and/or the diffusion of benefits.

V . How to Apply

Those interested in submitting proposals in response to this solicitation must complete the required application forms and submit related required documents. (See below for how to obtain application forms and guides for completing proposals.) Applicants must include the following information/forms to qualify for consideration:

- Standard Form (SF) 424—application for Federal assistance
- **Geographic Areas Affected Worksheet**

S o l i c i t a t i o n

- Assurances
- Certifications Regarding Lobbying, Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements (one form)
- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities
- Budget Detail Worksheet
- Budget Narrative
- Negotiated indirect rate agreement (if appropriate)
- Names and affiliations of all key persons from applicant and subcontractor(s), advisors, consultants, and advisory board members. Include name of principal investigator, title, organizational affiliation (if any), department (if institution of higher education), address, phone, and fax
- Proposal abstract
- Table of contents
- Program narrative or technical proposal
- **Privacy certificate**
- **Form 310 (Protection of Human Subjects Assurance Identification/ Certification/ Declaration)**
- **Environmental Assessment (if required)**
- References
- Letters of cooperation from organizations collaborating in the research project
- Résumés
- Appendixes, if any (e.g., list of previous NIJ awards, their status, and products [in NIJ or other publications])

Confidentiality of information and human subjects protection. NIJ has adopted new policies and procedures regarding the confidentiality of information and human subjects protection. Please see the *Guidelines for Submitting Proposals for National Institute of Justice-Sponsored Research* for details on the new requirements.

Proposal abstract. The proposal abstract, when read separately from the rest of the application, is meant to

serve as a succinct and accurate description of the proposed work. Applicants must concisely describe the research goals and objectives, research design, and methods for achieving the goals and objectives. Summaries of past accomplishments are to be avoided, and proprietary/confidential information is not to be included. Length is not to exceed 400 words. Use the following two headers:

Project Goals and Objectives:

Proposed Research Design and Methodology:

Page limit. The number of pages in the “Program Narrative” part of the proposal must not exceed 30 (double-spaced pages, margins of a minimum of 1", and no less than 11 point font size)

Due date. Completed proposals **must be received** at the National Institute of Justice by the close of business on **December 15, 2000**. Extensions of this deadline will not be permitted.

Award period. In general, NIJ limits its grants and cooperative agreements to a maximum period of 24 months.

Number of awards. NIJ anticipates supporting one or more grants under this solicitation.

Award amount. The total amount of funding available for this NIJ solicitation is \$1,000,000.

Applying. Two packets need to be obtained: (1) application forms (including a sample budget worksheet) and (2) guidelines for submitting proposals (including requirements for proposal writers and requirements for grant recipients). To receive them, applicants can:

- Access the Justice Information Center on the Web: <http://www.ncjrs.org/fedgrant.htm#nij> or the NIJ Web site: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding.htm>

These Web sites offer the NIJ application forms and guidelines as electronic files that may be downloaded to a personal computer.

- Request hard copies of the forms and guidelines by mail from the National Criminal Justice

S o l i c i t a t i o n

Reference Service at 800–851–3420 or from the Department of Justice Response Center at 800–421–6770 (in the Washington, D.C., area, at 202–307–1480).

- Request copies by fax. Call 800–851–3420 and select option 1, then option 1 again for NIJ. Code is 1023.

Applicants are also invited to request the following background materials from the Department of Justice Response Center (1-800-421-6770) including:

- An abstract of the Abt Associates, proposal to conduct “A National Assessment of School Resource Officer Programs”
- “Strategic Planning Meeting on School Safety: Summary Report on the Proceedings,” April 25–26, 1999
- “1999 Annual Report on School Safety,” Departments of Education and Justice

Guidance and information. Applicants who wish to receive additional guidance and information may contact the U.S. Department of Justice Response Center at 800–421–6770. Center staff can provide assistance or refer applicants to an appropriate NIJ professional. Applicants may, for example, wish to discuss their prospective research topics with the NIJ professional staff.

Send 10 copies of the completed application to:

School Safety Research and Evaluation
National Institute of Justice
810 Seventh Street N.W.
Washington, DC 20531
[overnight courier ZIP code 20001]

For more information on the National Institute of Justice, please contact:

National Criminal Justice Reference Service

Box 6000
Rockville, MD 20849-6000
800-851-3420
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(<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij>).